How to type Chinese using Pinyin

Select your operating system for a guide on how to enable Chinese text input.
Windows 7
Windows 8
Mac OSX - Mountain Lion, Mavericks
iPhone & iPad
Android

How to type Chinese on Windows 7

Open the Control Panel, click Change keyboards or other input methods

Click Change Keyboards...
Keyboards and other input languages
To change your keyboard or input language click Change keyboards.

How do I change the keyboard layout for the Welcome screen?

Display language
Install or uninstall languages that Windows can use to display text and where supported recognize speech and handwriting.

How can I install additional languages?

Click Add...

Default input language
Select one of the installed input languages to use as the default for all input fields.

English (United States) - United States (Apple) - Parallels

Installed services
Select the services that you want for each input language shown in the list. Use the Add and Remove buttons to modify this list.

EN
English (United States)

Keyboard
- United States (Apple) - Parallels

Add... Remove Properties... Move Up Move Down
Typing Chinese using Pinyin

In the system tray, you can change typing mode.

Type Pinyin, and select the characters as you type.
What native Chinese people actually do:

Most people who live in mainland China typically install a 3rd-party input method. Google Pinyin Input is very popular. The Google input method has advantages:
It is partially cloud based, and will add new words as they become common in Chinese.
It is a bit smarter, and learns from what you type. For instance, if your home address uses a rare Chinese character, it will learn this and make it a top suggestion, rather than having to frequently scroll through lists of characters.
It has other advanced features
The downside is the software must monitor all keystrokes to function, so you need administrator privileges to install it.